

Spiritualized Happiness-Theory;

- - OR - -

NEW UTILITARIANISM.

A Lecture before the Farmington School of
Philosophy, June, 1890,

BY

W. D. LIGHTHALL, M.A., B.C.L.

*The EDITH and LORNE PIERCE
COLLECTION of CANADIANA*



Queen's University at Kingston

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PREFACE.

The present publication is a brief systematization of a theory, of which more or less undigested notes have been published, under the titles of "An Analysis of the Altruistic Act," and "Sketch of a New Utilitarianism." Its present shape is that of a lecture, read June 20th, 1890, before the Farmington School of Philosophy, and is connected with an examination of the Ethical System of the late Thomas Hill Green, in relation to Utilitarianism. The author desires to dedicate this issue to The Philosophy Club, of Montreal, an earnest little circle, of which he has the honor of being a member.

MONTREAL,

August, 1890.

SPIRITUALIZED HAPPINESS-THEORY.

I.—KANTS ETHIC.

A century ago (1785–88), Immanuel Kant, living his quaint but momentous life at Koenigsberg, arrived at a profound theory of ethics. Confusedly and contradictorily expressed it was, like much other of his thinking, as he himself acknowledged;* but as we disentangle the phrases, get to the meaning of the obscurities, and understand from the context how to interpret his contradictions, we find that Kant's theory arrived at the deepest and most nearly consistent view of morality which the knowledge of that age would permit to any theory. Beside it, the ethics of Hume, and those of his contemporaries Price and Reid, were but rudimentary.

Kant's theory of Moral Obligation is condensed in his dictum: “Act so that the maxim of thy will might be made a principle of universal legislation.”

It was in the *universality* of the moral command, not in anything in the content, that, he insisted, lay its distinct character. Doing scientifically what the ancient Stoics had unscientifically done, he ascribed this universality to our faculty of universals, the Reason, and insisted on its deep spiritual origin and its superiority to chance desires. Condemning *personal* pleasure and interest as aims, he urges man to listen to nothing but the call of Universality—to seek only “the interest of Reason.”

As has been frequently pointed out, the vulnerable point in Kant's statement was that it is *abstract*. Were we to interpret it strictly, we should miss a warm, real end, and should be forced to ask the further question, “*What kind* of a universal is it we are called to seek?” and also, “*Why* does it commend itself?” questions which Kant never answered clearly.

The reason I attribute is, that the age was not ripe for him to be able to do so. Kant studied in a day when modern discovery and

* Preface to 2nd ed. K. of P. R.

discussion had not yet brought together the vast store of information which in our time is added to the stock-in-trade of ethical thinkers. It was only later that the Evolutionists supplied those wonderful facts concerning the related world of conscious creatures which have increased our lights upon Ethics almost as much as upon any other science. It was only later that Kant's own metaphysic had time for development into the great and fruitful systems of his famous "children," Fichte, Schelling, Schopenhauer and Hegel. And Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill had not as yet inaugurated the keen Utilitarian discussion on the place of pleasure and pain.

II.—GREEN'S ETHIC.

Thomas Hill Green's Ethic stands at this day in its point of view no further advanced than the theory of Kant. That is not saying little, it should be said, for in point of *clearness* and *development* he has given a value to Kant's theory almost equal to producing a second original. To do so, he has added great improvements from Hegel, and has made minor ones of his own. You are familiar, no doubt, with the manner in which he discloses the nature and action of the unifying power in our consciousness, and, from it, arrives at the conclusion that "a common spiritual source" must be the basis both of our knowledge and of nature; that this mysterious source must be a world-consciousness, of which ours is a limited mode; that man is, in so far as he is the expression of this world-consciousness, "free" in the sense of not subject to a blind course of nature; that it exhibits a unifying and governing power upon his *wants* as well as his knowledge, and impels him to consciously seek as an object his completest *self-satisfaction*, so leading him on to the ideal of "a better state of himself as yet unattained."

In Green's own words (§ 115*): "The ground upon which, rightly or wrongly, the reducibility of moral conduct to a series of natural phenomena, and with it the possibility of a physical science of ethics, is here denied . . . lies in the view that in all conduct to which moral predicates are applicable, a man is an object to himself; that such conduct, equally, whether virtuous or vicious, expresses a motive consisting in an idea of personal good which the man seeks to realize by action; and that the presentation of such an idea is not explicable

* Of his "Prologomena to Ethics."

by any series of events in time, but implies the action of an eternal consciousness which makes the processes of animal life organic to a particular reproduction of itself in man."

He goes on to consider the relation of Will to Desire, and agrees with the doctrine that the Will is *the strongest desire*, with the qualification that it is "*the man as desiring* or putting himself forth in desire for the realization of some object present to him in idea." Will and Intellect are thus practically found working together, but are different phases of the self. "Will is equally and indistinguishably desire and thought,"—not *mere* desire or *mere* thought, but "the will is simply the man. Any act of will is the expression of the man as he at the time is." *In the specific difference of the objects of willing* lies the difference between good and bad will—the difference, for example, between pleasure as an object, and a vocation conceived as given by God. The Utilitarian affirms that the moral act is one done *intentionally*, and that intention judged by the measure of pleasure and pain in the results. The Kantian—with Green—on the contrary holds that the goodness of the will does not depend on anything extrinsic such as pleasure or pain, but on itself as an absolute end, that is, as prescribed by a universal practical law—a seeking of the highest satisfaction of the nature (§ 155). According to all strictly Hedonistic theories, the difference (§ 156) between objects willed is extrinsic, not intrinsic:—the motive is supposed to be in all cases the same—desire for some pleasure or aversion from some pain—the only difference being in the results, not the motive. This, he asserts, is very plausible at first (§ 157), but not (§ 158) when the above account of Desire is remembered, showing that pleasure is not its only object. *Pleasure, it is true, attends all self-satisfaction, but is not always its object.*

His view of the object of the good will is hence finally re-explained to be (§ 172): to fulfil a vocation conceived as given by the divine mind in the man's self-consciousness. "Men come," he says (§ 179), "to seek their satisfaction, their good, in objects conceived as desirable because contributing to the best state or perfection, of man, and this change we describe by saying that their will becomes conformable to their reason." The essence of what men seek is "a fully articulated idea of the best life for man."

Green claims, with a large share of truth, that his view has this advantage as a theory, over "the injunction to make life as pleasant

as possible, that it corresponds, while the latter does not, "to the inward law by which men have been governed in the effort and aspiration that have yielded the various excellencies in the way of art and knowledge no less than of conduct, which now determine our ideal of perfection."

Such is Green's system. As space forbids any attempt to seriously argue out its details, the remarks I have to offer must take the nature of propositions, linking together certain views which can merely be hoped to commend themselves to further thought.

III.—CRITICISMS ON GREEN'S ETHIC.

Firstly, Green seems to have an unfortunate aversion to using evolutionary material. "That countless generations," he says (§ 783), for instance, "during which a transmitted organism was progressively modified by reaction on its surroundings, by struggle for existence or otherwise, till its functions became such that an eternal consciousness could realize or reproduce itself through them, this might add to the wonder with which the consideration of what we do and are must always fill us, but it could not alter the results of that consideration." Now, I think it can be said that the word "till" here implies a total misconception of the mental process in animals, and of the evolutionary position of man's consciousness; that a study of these from a psychological standpoint would teach us rather that the great Eternal Consciousness was "realizing itself" in *the whole kingdom* of animal consciousness; that the unifying of consciousness is a process which had begun in the lowest protozoa, and is traceable in the acts of the amœba so often taken as a type of rudimentary life; that it has been evident everywhere that we have had proofs of conscious action at all; and that the mental operations of men differ from these only in complexity and greater vividness and breadth of sight (qualifications which are not, of course, without vast meaning).

Man, it is true, in his higher examples is capable of, as Green instances, the consciousness of self as apart from mental changes—but it is too much to attempt, at this date, to explain that capability totally out of connection with our rise out of animal life. I do not see that the consciousness of self, as apart from mental changes, is beyond evidence in the higher apes, nor that there is any marked scientific difference between their mental structure and the working consciousness of the lowest men. The brute is simply in the

position of a child. Green actually admits that “the child which is to be the father of the man capable of ‘a wish to be better,’ cannot be the mere child of nature.” (§ 113.)

Secondly, In the same way he is anxious (§ 91) to draw a hard and fast line between moral and instinctive action. To that I would answer that Conscience is *au fonds* instinctive (C. G. Huxley’s “Hume, p. 207, and Fowler’s “Progressive Morality,” &c.), except that it is a complex, and (to use what may appear to be a contradictory adjective) a conscious instinct, that in fact, throwing aside for the moment the artificial and secondary distinction which confines the word “instinct” within narrow limits, the process of *all thought* is instinctive.

Green’s splendid analysis of human knowing would have been broadened and deepened by a connected view of the similarities and relations of function to instinct, of these to animal intelligence and willing, and of animal intelligence and willing to human consciousness and willing and habit. Underlying all of them, and they grade by degrees into each others’ fields, is found the silent, same, ever-working, understanding Power, pursuing the same end, and working by the same process. Our own consciousness, in fact, rather reveals the Power differently than makes any difference. How *can* our self-consciousness make a difference? It is but an intermittent and partial thing. The workings of our soul proceed without consulting us. The wonder of our organism—which is its *harmony* of parts—depends on but a limited, imperfect, precarious, co-ordination, which a grain of sand in the brain may destroy, and make any of us into the wild beast. Probing down within ourselves, must we not confess that we do not know the vast ocean of our own being, and but see what is brought to the surface?

So, behind the infantile consciousness of the animal lies the same depth of being.

Even of moral freedom all our power is brought up from, and delegated by, that inner Soul.

What if that Soul be our real fundamental self? Will not that be the solution of “freedom?” What, too, then, is willing?

IV.—NEW UTILITARIANISM.

Pardon me if I present for your consideration the way by which I came to an answer to such questions.

Putting aside all theories of willing, let us look over the mere phenomena of it. In the complete act of will two sets of phenomena present themselves: one, *the mechanical series*, represented by the nerve-arc mechanism of the brain and nervous system as well as the muscles and other appliances of the human machine. This can be conceived as performing its functions altogether independently of consciousness, as a mere machine. The other set of phenomena is the *mental states* which present themselves in association with the steps of the mechanical process. These in their turn can be readily conceived as proceeding altogether independently of the mechanical series. A man feels his fingers growing cold in a draft. He makes an effort and draws them away. There is in his mind a disagreeable sensation—call it a pain. This is associated with an instantaneous desire to escape the cause of pain. (I wish to avoid the term “*volition*.”) Then comes a determination to put forth effort. And the determination is followed by a sense of effort put forth. Lastly, the muscles of the arm move, and draw away the hand.

Why, in all the lower forms of action, should the conscious state be, as it is, *pleasure* concomitanted with preservative states of the mechanism; and *pain* concomitanted with destructive states. Why could not the body of a man proceed through life mentally in agony, while physically in perfect health?

The difficulty to consider is that pleasure, in its strict acceptation, is a *pure sensation*, and nothing more, which, obviously, is impotent to set forces in motion, and which, conversely, mere forces are as obviously impotent to make or bring on.

I came to the conclusion that *some bond, neither physical nor of consciousness, neither on the one side a phenomenon of mind, nor on the other of matter or form, but capable of interacting between the two, and forming a connection between them, works here*. It belongs to a realm other than the physical and the mental. There is, therefore, such a third sphere in man; and out of it comes ethical action.

At first I would not give a name to this bond, or source, or power, which acts with such meaning in providing for us *happiness* and averting from us *pain*. At length the name which seemed most fitting was “The Mysterious Power.” In tracing through the facts of the universe the relatives of the typical act of will, which, with apologies to Green, for a moment I shall define, as *the co-ordination of a mechanical series towards a result of pleasure*, I found the

Mysterious Power governing *everything* for progress towards happiness. Unconscious function (for example, the play of the lungs in breathing) showed its presence and proved itself but a form of this co-ordination of a mechanical series to the service of a happiness. Instinct, conscious of the way but not of the plan, contained it. It also was the co-ordination of a mechanical series to the service of a happy result. Animal communities, where each individual, by his nature, tends to contribute to the happiness of the whole, and where, in fact, we get out of the individual, into the sphere of a group, showed it. Conscious Egoism, the pursuit of one's own happiness, was the type of it in small. In Altruism, where the individual consciously prefers another's good to his own, instinctive as all the keenest psychologists, in one phrase or another, agree it to be, the quiet Power shifts the happiness sought from the man's own to that of others, and leads him mysteriously to a higher pinnacle. Evolution, with this key, became one great, long-continued act of *will*. That it was the principle of all the vital units of which each man is made, gave a fundamental reason for faith in men as they are, and in the future of human history. They must obey this law, for it is the law of their being. It explained the meaning and limits of human freedom. Looking farther and broader than man and his places and ages into the universe itself, it gave confidence in universe-history and in immortality.

Lastly, and not least of the gifts, it gave what I believe to be the one complete and demonstrable teleology—the teleology of happiness-facts, speaking with simple certainty in the typical voluntary act itself, for here clearly is a something in the universe acting with an unmistakeable meaning and proving universal purpose.

Though I hesitate to institute a comparison between these conclusions and the great thinking of Green, yet he arrives, I think it will be seen, by a far more laborious method at no more than the same results so far as they go. The Eternal or Universal Consciousness unifying our knowledge and *wants* is the same as The Mysterious Power. I did not name its understanding a "consciousness" for the same reason that Spencer hesitated to apply the term to his "Unknowable," namely, that it is so far above us that it may no more be described in terms of man's consciousness "than man's consciousness in terms of that of a plant." The practical matter to us,

however, is that it acts in our sphere in a manner which is *equivalent* to that of a consciousness.

Next to the nature of the source of Willing comes the question of the nature of the Moral Ideal. What is the end sought by the agent in a moral act? Is it, as Green concludes, "his satisfaction or good in objects conceived as desirable *because contributing* to the best state or perfection of man;" "the fulfilment of a vocation conceived as given by the divine mind in his self-consciousness?" Or is it, in some form, *pleasure*?

As to the word "pleasure" in such discussions, it is used, of course, in a broader sense than its vulgar acceptation, and includes escape from pain, as well as every sort of agreeable consciousness up to the most refined happiness, and on to infinite bliss. It is to be wished that the word "Feeling," which conveniently covers both pleasure and pain, had been used in that sense by Green. He applies it, instead, to mere indifferent perceptive sensation, contrary to our current usage and in a manner productive of some confusion.

In combating it strenuously like all Kantists, he certainly has the advantage of the Utilitarians in the matter of logical consistency. (See, e.g., §§ 162-170, attack on J. S. Mill.) Mill was forced to admit what Green urges, that the highest results have been obtained by the actions of men who set pleasure as a conscious aim aside.

The distinctive principles of Utilitarianism are:—

That Pleasure or Happiness is the only real good, and suffering the only real evil.

That what one ought to regard in an aim is its ultimate value in pleasure—its "utility."

That each ought to seek the greatest good of the greatest number:—or, in better phrase, to produce the greatest quantity of happiness (impersonally considered.)

Now, what it is proper to demand of the Utilitarian, is to find in the constitution of the individual a principle or principles logically sufficient to explain why, if the pursuit of pleasure be the only intelligible principle, he was ever bound to prefer that of others to his own, as he feels that he is in Altruistic action. Sympathy can only account for it partly. Bentham tried the introduction of sanctions, such as the pains of law, the esteem of fellow-men, etc. Mill, after reviewing the sanctions, concludes to "a *natural* basis of *sentiment* for Utilitarian morality," a "desire to be in unity with our fellow-

creatures." He admits all that is claimed for the noble character of the facts of disinterested action, and says of the martyrs, "Their impulse was a divine enthusiasm.—a self-forgetting devotion to an idea." In admitting this, however, his own case is gone. His arguments from sanctions (indirect calculations) might hold good up to a certain point ; but MARTYRDOM is the crucial test. For if a man allows any moment of exaltation to destroy all the goods of living, he should be from the personal point of view the chiefest of miscalculators, the most unreasonable of men. Even if you suggest that had he lived, his life afterwards would have been too painful to be a good : we have to reply that if he were a reasonable man, neither he himself nor any other could reproach him.

Something was wanting, and this Mill's associates and followers have never succeeded in supplying. The reason of the failure is, that they held a doctrine in psychology which precluded their doing so—the doctrine that the complex mental phenomena were sufficiently explainable by mere associations of the simpler, in other words, the doctrine of Associationism, which had descended from Hartley.

Associationism claimed "to be neither materialistic nor idealistic, to have nothing to do with mind or matter, in themselves, or with metaphysical problems of any sort, but only with facts, *i.e.*, with phenomena."

Adequate explanation of Ethical facts requires some deeper psychological basis ; but with for basis the hypothesis of a mysterious power acting as I have outlined it, this difficulty with Utilitarianism disappears.

The New Utilitarianism thus produced would then stand as follows :

That there is a mysterious underlying Power at the base of all conscious Nature and also, apparently, of all unconscious Nature also ; of which, Evolution, regarded as one fact with Willing, is the manner of action.

That a purposiveness, of which our individual purposenesses are revealed and specialized segments, exists and works through the Universe, and is characteristic, among others, of that power.

That the phenomena of the Ethical sphere in and through us, are part of that Power's universal action.

That its essential object of action is *pleasure* (including avoidance of pain). Its guiding principle is the greatest happiness of the whole. It is itself the basis of that principle.

Now, I ask most earnestly whether this theory does not reconcile the contentions of both Kantian and Hedonistic argument?

V.—REPLY TO OBJECTIONS TO NEW UTILITARIANISM.

Some of Green's objections to Utilitarianism at once disappear. The chief objections will likely be three which are familiar in ethical literature :

One is, that pleasure, to be the object and measure of a moral act, would have to be the personal pleasure of the agent—that the pleasure of others, being not felt by the agent, can have no real value to him as pleasure, and, if sought, is therefore sought on a different principle. A sufficient reply is, that the indications seem to be that our real self is the Universal self, and hence, that all pleasure is felt by our *hidden* nature. This gives a comprehensible reason of action on the part of the Mysterious Power.

A second objection is, that the field of the infinite moral ideal is too vast for us to attempt to characterize it as pleasure.

But all we can expect of any general theory is that it shall fully account for all the facts of the known field—in other words, hold true so far as we can see and infer. *Inference* here, as well as in other reasonings, is the great finger-post of mankind into the unknown. In any case, infinitely intense happiness is surely an immense ideal.

A third objection is, that pleasure is a low, gross affair at best, and merits a measure of contempt.

But why should pleasure be deemed thus low and gross? There is nothing in the feeling alone that should make it so. Recall any of the simple delights of life. Look at the child putting its doll to sleep, with the absorbed, innocent smile on its face; or see it rushing out of doors on a glad spring morning, its eyes full of dancing laughter; or remember Coleridge's water-snakes :

“ Within the shadow of the ship,
I watched their rich attire ;
Blue, glossy-green, and velvet-black,
They coiled, and swam, and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.
O happy, living things ! No tongue
Their beauty might declare :
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware.”

Surely there is nothing but good in the mere *state* of pleasure. This is now generally admitted, and even more readily where escape from pain is concerned.

But, the persistent objection goes, pleasure often misleads and distracts us from our *higher* good ; it is attached in its strongest forms to the lower life, and drags man down from the pursuit of better things, even sometimes into pollution. Perfectly true. The most advanced Hedonists have come to agree that the exclusive seeking of personal pleasure does this. Nothing is more patent throughout life than the justice of the charge against *human egoism as a guide*, and on account of it, pleasure has had a curiously outcast history. The facts of Feeling have always had prominence in ethics from the days of Democritus and the Cyrenaics. A cult of solely personal pleasure, such as that of these philosophers, began, even from their time, to stunt the study of feeling. They, it is true, raised it a step above low sensuality by condemning gross pleasures. But even with this improvement, it labored under the difficulty of insufficiency in the instinctive consciousness of mankind. Stoicism, therefore, met it with complete denial and military contempt. When Early Christianity came upon the field, it, though really founded upon a happiness, gave it, at least as earthly, no better treatment than the Stoics. The monastic asceticism carried the position to such absurdities, that pleasure became for ages throughout Europe *the test* of wickedness. During the past two centuries the dominant ethicists have returned in great degree to the attitude of Stoicism.

Pleasure has thus been condemned through the whole ancient and mediæval, and almost the whole modern world, to contempt and neglect. But Butler, Hartley, Hume and Bentham successively developed it into "impersonality and universality resulting in the system of Utilitarianism, and thus have raised feeling to something of dignity in philosophy. Yet the Utilitarian treatment of it, though broad, has still been superficial.

Is not what we need a philosophy which will treat the universe from the point of view of Feeling ? Have we not too long had philosophies solely confining themselves to examining facts of perception and intelligence—*indifferent* facts. To raise Feeling to its proper place—if it be not presumptuous to put this sentence so—would, I believe, be a work worthy of a generation of philosophy. An induction of feeling-facts would likely show that moral force is as

simple and wide-reaching as gravitation, and very likely connected with it. And why not an Idealism of Feeling as exalted as, nay, more holy than, any Idealism of Intellect ?

But, at least, there is a *practical* consensus to-day that the greatest happiness of the people—their relief from pains, and the provision to them of harmless pleasures—is an object to die for. When universal then, there is pure value in these things. Pleasure is therefore not necessarily gross : indifference to pain not intrinsically heroic : other things equal, pleasure is good and pain bad.

VI.—FEELING AND VALUE.

But I will go further and say they are, by the construction of our natures, the only standards of *value* that we can understand. *Feeling is the basis of our whole idea of "value."*

It is feelings alone which are of import to human beings. Objects, the world, God, our intelligence and even our existence we can care nothing about, except as they can cause or feel pleasure or pain, without which we could not understand them as meaning anything. I do not say that we cannot rise above our personal feelings ; but we could not rise above them without them. It is they which interpret all things to us and make them of import, little or tremendous.

The universe is very differently interpreted by the powers of feeling from what it is by those of perceiving. What is great according to extension or to vividness may stir us but little as to intensity of pleasure or pain. Feeling ranges all objects, known and imagined, on a scale of its own. The great fact is, the pleasure of pleasure, the pain of pain.* As George Eliot says : “To them that know it, pain is only pain.” On this scale of value, the criterion is the simple rule of greater and less.

In some of the most impressive words of the *Apology*, (Plato’s, Jowett’s Tr.) of Socrates at his trial, he implies this rule in his own ethical view :

“ ‘ O, my friend, why do you, who are a citizen of the great and mighty and wise city Athens, care so much about laying up the greatest amount of money, and honor and reputation, and so little about wisdom,

* As the significance of pleasure and pain and their value in themselves are that upon which the point of the argument rests, particular attention is asked for a realization by the reader of *what pleasure is*, and *what pain is*—which can be easily studied by experiencing and observing them ; a matter much misunderstood.

and truth and the greatest improvement of the soul, which you never regard nor heed at all? Are you not ashamed of this?' And if the person with whom I am arguing says: 'Yes, but I do not care,' I do not depart or let him go at once; I interrogate and cross-examine him, and if I think that he has no virtue, but only says that he has, I reproach him with undervaluing the greater and overvaluing the less."

The criterion is that of greater-or-less—but for the Universal Subject. When only the individual is concerned (that is to say, when his interest and that of the Universal Subject coincide) it is a question of greater-and-less for him—as a whole person. This universality cannot be abstracted from feeling, as the followers of Kant make abstraction of it. The reason of its validity is that it is attended with the happiness called harmony, for harmony is nothing else but a happiness-fact. The feeling-standard assigns to each act, thought and possession—to everything—its exact value. Ethics is, therefore, the science of values—the science of the real values of all things. Compare Lotze (*Outlines of Aæsthetics*, § 13):

"Nothing else affirms itself so unconditionally and so immediately in respect of its value as happiness. Only it has valid claim as the ultimate thing to be realized. Only in regard to it is the question absurd why it, instead of unhappiness, must be the final purpose of the world."

Ethics is consequently clearly the most momentous of sciences!

Think of the vast significance to the human soul, of the terms of the scale of happiness and pain which we are impelled and constructed to conceive! That portion of them which is revealed to our human experience is manifestly but a segment in the series, so small that, in the phrase of St. Augustine, "it is not only not worthy of comparison, but not even of mention." The immensity of ideal Pain is simply appalling to contemplate.

"As if all misery, all sorrow, grief,
All pain, all anguish, all despair, which all
Have suffered, or shall feel, from first to last
Eternity, had gathered to ONE PANG,
And issued in one groan of boundless wo!"

—*Pollok's Course of Time, Bk. X.*

On the other hand, as for infinite Happiness (including necessarily all consciousness and therefore being necessarily spiritual), it too is

unspeakably overwhelming. Those glorious words of Dante fall to us as if down from Paradise :

“Trasumanar significar per verba
Non si poria.”

But do our souls not tell us that even though we have not words nor thoughts sufficient, we shall not find rest without a final *happy* heaven, “the blest inheritance of saints,” where all shall be concord, peace and bliss and love.

It is, then, in the pursuit of happiness so spiritualized, putting aside earthly aims that the unseen may be advanced, that, I submit, the secret of Ethics dwells. That view corresponds, in substance, with Christian Ethic. Among scientific systems, it corresponds nearest and substantially with the Ethic of Lotze. My road to it, however, that is to say by examining the typical voluntary act, is so simple that it appears to me to have more value as a method than Lotze's. Another thing that may be interesting in it is that it is the strict descendant of British philosophy—Hume, Darwin and Mill.

VII.—ETHICS OF LOTZE AND SCHOPENHAUER.

In corroboration of it, let me compare the statement of Lotze :

“The above-mentioned view is combated in vain from the side of ethical Rigorism, which, through its well-known undervaluation of all ‘pleasure,’ always, in the practical domain, regards nothing but disinterested obedience to the universal commands of duty as ethical ; and therefore in the religious domain also would not, in any case, be disposed to acknowledge ‘supreme blessedness’ as the final purpose of the world,—perhaps not, even with any readiness, even as a tolerable consequence of that purpose. With respect to this point, we briefly remark as follows : if obedience or disobedience to an ethical law were to occasion not a trace of pleasure or pain to any sensitive being in the world, whether God, angels or men—it would be utterly incomprehensible why it is just the obedience and not the disobedience to the law that must have an obligatory force, since, after all, the effects of the two modes of conduct consist only in the production of different states of facts, one of which would be as indifferent as the other. In a word, it is impossible to understand what is to constitute the ‘value’ of any action if its results are not able to

produce some ‘Good’ somewhere in the world, or to increase the sum of already existing ‘Good’ after.

“But while we designate Things, States and Events as ‘Good,’ it is, after all, only in so far as they are means for obtaining the only real and substantial good, and this latter always exists only in pleasure of some sensitive spirits completely apart from the realm of actuality.

“No Ethics can avoid having regard to a purpose that is final and in itself of absolute value. No matter to what extent many rigorous systems formulate their highest ethical laws, apparently without any such regard, still, in addition to the assurances that they are the highest laws, the conclusion must always be supplied: What, then, would be the result, if these laws were not obeyed?

“The foregoing assertions do not degrade morals. It is not meant by them that the direct endeavor after happiness—and that, too, after one’s own happiness—should be the ethically praiseworthy motive of our action. On this point our conscience gives us sufficient instruction, since it interprets the endeavor as in itself considered indifferent and merely natural, but, on the contrary, interprets as ethically laudable only the endeavor to secure the happiness for others. Thus (as might be further proved) the command of ‘benevolence’ is, among all ethical commands, really the fundamental one, and only upon the assumption of it do all the rest receive their obligatory value.

“On the other hand, in seeking a coherent view of the world, we have a speculative interest in the fact that the ethical commands, which we are able in practice to obey without any future question as to their origin, are not wholly lacking in coherence with the arrangement of the world. That such arrangement therefore be reckoned to the account of the final repose of blessedness is a speculative claim which we set up in the interest, to a certain extent, of our reverence for the world, but not for the satisfaction of our own wishes for happiness. We are naturally unable to avoid including our own welfare also in this comprehensive final purpose.

“The foregoing are perhaps the incentives which, in religious thought, have led to this doctrine of blessedness. From these incentives are distinguished, and not to their advantage, at least, as regards the intention, the philosophical systems which only in a practical way set up claims upon our obedience to universal ethical law, but speculatively give us no enlightenment with respect to the ultimate

end to which properly this ceaseless expenditure of ethical energy is to lead.

"Certainly, the laudation alluded to above holds good only of the intention and not of the performance of this religious opinion. It is wrecked rather in the attempt actually to deduce of the present from the supreme purpose of blessedness.

"The first objection certainly might be disregarded, namely, why this purpose could be accomplished at all only as a result of a course of the world; and why it could not be accomplished as well from the very beginning.

"At the foundation of such a question there really lies the logical error of regarding the conception of blessedness or of pleasure in general in this universal sense of it as something realizable.

"But the pleasure that is without content can no more exist than a sensation of 'color in general,' which were neither green nor blue. 'Every pleasure' is rather an altogether determinate one, which is distinguished, as to its intensity and coloring, from others, and in both respects is determined by the nature of the content of which it is an enjoyment.

"Hence it may be made evident that we are utterly unable to form any real idea of a blessedness without content, although we can form the name of it; that it is capable of realization rather only upon the supposition that there are actual relations of some sort which constitute the object of enjoyment in this pleasure; and, finally, that even these relations cannot be as they will, but together must form an orderly arrangement of the world."

This paper ought scarcely to be closed without a few words on the brilliant and singular moral theory of Arthur Schopenhauer, which has a number of material points of contact with the one now brought forward.

According to Schopenhauer's reasoning, the one grand, all-inclusive thing in the Universe is Will—which pervades and makes everything, and which is known to man on its internal side in his own will. Will is occupied with a blind striving throughout nature to reach the state of *life*, though life is by nature characterized by a preponderance of pain over pleasure, making the living state not worth attaining. The remedy of the philosophic man is to cease the useless struggle of the will for pleasures, and by denying it avoid its pains. In man will is put in movement with mathematical certainty, by motives of

pleasure or pain. Man's customary tendency is to seek his own pleasure at any cost to others,—the principle of *egoism*. The mass of men would act like wild beasts to each other were the restraints of law and conventionality for a week removed. But when man arrives at high intelligence he discovers a difference, mutually exclusive, between egoism and *moral value* in respect to actions. Action for others is that which alone has moral value, and it is founded upon the striking fact in man, of *pity*; which Schopenhauer refers to a metaphysical origin, the old conception of the En kai Pan, in other words, a mysterious consciousness dawning in him that the man is one with all mankind.

The short answer to the element of pessimism in Schopenhauer, and to that of all other pessimists, is the character of the typical act of will itself.

He was, however, if I am not mistaken, the first to treat Willing from the point of view of an inductive evolutionary theory.

VIII.—CONCLUDING REMARKS.

He who sees with us will not break away from the exalted discipline of the commands of Conscience-instinct, but assigning its *ultimate* reason, will listen with reverence to it, will discover its voice in those breathings of the soul in which the highly sensitive Christian aspiration longs for the world of Joy; and will recognize snatches of revelation in that splendid hymnology which prophesies the radiance of glory and bliss around the Ineffable Love.

Green's system goes far on the way, but it stops short without giving a sufficient reason for itself. When we ask by what we are to judge his "best state or perfection of man," nothing tangible but happiness presents itself. Kant himself occasionally goes farther than his descendant: "Moral conceptions," he says (K. of P. R., Bk. II., chap. III., s. 1) "are not perfectly pure conceptions of reason, because an empirical element—of pleasure or pain—*lies at the foundation of them*."

But, happiness and evolution apart, Green's work is, in its best parts, doubtless one of the closest pieces of pure psychology ever thought out, and more difficult and valuable because it was done on partial ground, and in a sense resembles the picture of a castle whose base is hid in mist.

"We all," he truly concludes, "recognize, and perhaps in some fragmentary way practise, virtues which both carry in themselves unfulfilled possibilities, and at the same time plainly point out the direction in which their own further development is to be sought for. . . . No one is eager *enough* to know what is true, or make what is beautiful; no one ready *enough* to endure pain and forego pleasure in the service of his fellows; no one impartial *enough* in treating the claims of another exactly as his own."



